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sense, great breadth of view and vast erudition, similar to that on which Lord Acton's reputation rests. Like Lord Acton's erudition, Altamira's makes the book hard reading by unnecessarily obscuring the author's own views.

GEORGE LOUIS BEER.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.

The Writings of Thomas Paine. Collected and Edited by MONCURE DANIEL CONWAY. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons. Vol. I (1774-1779), 1894, viii, 445 pp.; Vol. II (1779-1792), 1894, 523 pp.; Vol. III (1791-1804), 1895, xv, 436 pp.; Vol. IV, 1896, xxiii, 521 pp.

The age in which Paine lived and wrote had need of his peculiar talents. No other pamphleteer of his time could so well gather the thoughts and sentiments common to a whole people and give to them such clear and forcible expression. His position and importance in the history of our Revolution depend not upon his constructive ability, but rather upon his power of vigorous enunciation, of making a people think in clear terms what everybody already felt to be true. No pamphlet of the period was so widely circulated or exercised such a powerful influence as *Common Sense*: it found its way into almost every family throughout the colonies, and at once became part of the political creed of the patriots. Nor was its influence confined to America: Deane wrote from Paris only a few months after the publication of the pamphlet that it was having "a greater run, if possible, here than in America." Paine's enthusiastic devotion to the cause of liberty carried him headlong into the French Revolution. *The Rights of Man*, perhaps his ablest work, was received by the world as favorably and exercised as great an influence as even *Common Sense*.

"It is not creditable," says Mr. Conway in his "Introduction," "that the world has had to wait so long for a complete edition of writings which excited the gratitude and admiration of the founders of republican liberty in America and Europe." To the general public, however, the mention of the name of Thomas Paine calls up even yet the religious iconoclast rather than the patriot philosopher; and probably the tardiness of the world in recognizing his real position in our Revolution is due in no small degree to the odium heaped upon him because of his religious opinions and personal habits. Had he died twenty years earlier, the author of *Common Sense* might have taken his place in the estimation of his countrymen by the side of

the great men with whom he labored. The careful and painstaking work of Mr. Conway is a long step towards rescuing the name of Paine from undeserved forgetfulness and setting aright before the world the man whose pen wielded such mighty influence in two great revolutions. Mr. Conway has brought to his task the carefulness of a scholar combined with the enthusiasm of an admirer ; his notes are few and to the point ; his research has brought to light a few articles which have hitherto been unknown, as well as a larger number that have not been recently republished. The first three volumes contain Paine's early and political works, while the fourth is devoted to his religious, poetical and scientific writings.

LESTER G. BUGBEE.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS.

Social Changes in England in the Sixteenth Century, as reflected in Contemporary Literature. Part I: Rural Changes. By EDWARD P. CHEYNEY, A.M. Boston and New York, Ginn & Co., 1895. — 114 pp.

In this brochure the changes that came over English society in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are examined by Professor Cheyney from the point of view of contemporary literature, which is, as all familiar with English economic history know, peculiarly rich in complaints over the distress and hardships of the times. The study is in many respects a particularly useful one; and through its quotations and maps it gives a lively picture of English rural life in an important period of transition. The quotations are practically complete, and the maps, — the first, a photograph of open fields of to-day in Germany ; the second, a photograph of four of the facsimile maps published by the University of Oxford in 1889, — although too limited in number, are distinctly new contributions.

The editor begins with the old *régime*, when the open-field system of cultivation was still in force — when tenure was fixed by custom and the legal relation of the tenant to the land was not well defined ; when the universal characteristics of the social organization were the large coöperative element in everyday life, the connection of the people with the soil, and the dependence of the system on custom and not on law or contract. He follows the movements of the next one hundred and fifty years (1450-1600), and traces the yielding of corporate life to individual freedom, the separation of the population from the land, and the substitution of contract and law for custom, in consequence of which the people at large, unable to accommodate